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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/717,541	11/21/2003	Tomas Gandemo	018798-181	7964

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EXAMINER

STEPHENS, JACQUELINE F

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3761

DATE MAILED: 09/01/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/717,541	Applicant(s) GANDEMO, TOMAS	
	Examiner Jacqueline F. Stephens	Art Unit 3761	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 24 May 2005 and 10/11/05.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Applicant's petition for withdrawal of the finality of the rejection of the last Office action was granted and, therefore, the finality of that action is withdrawn.

Response to Arguments

1. Applicant's arguments filed 5/24/05 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Regarding the rejection of claims 1-5 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Ando et al. USPN 537034, applicant's are not persuasive. Applicant argues Ando has the disadvantage of requiring the use of separate flaps in order to seal the pants diaper, which in turn make the diaper more difficult to manufacture and increase the costs thereof. However, the arguments do not give specific comparative results between the present application and the prior art. With respect to applicants' mention of manufacturing efficiency and costs, applicant is invited to substantiate such statements in an affidavit under 37 CFR 1.132.

Applicant argues the first and second opening and closing means are situated on respective sides of the first openable seal line and are arranged on a surface of the pants chassis, as opposed to projecting tape fasteners 6 of Ando, which project from a terminal edge. However, as shown in Figures 1, 2, and 4 of Ando, the 'projecting tapes' 6 are also arranged on a surface. The tapes are adhered to an inner surface of the diaper, which is best shown in Figures 2 and 4.

In response to applicant's argument that the references fail to show certain features of applicant's invention, it is noted that the features upon which applicant relies (i.e., second opening and closing means are disposed so as not to protrude from the pants diaper shape in the first sealed configuration of the openable seal line) are not recited in the rejected claim(s). Although the claims are interpreted in light of the specification, limitations from the specification are not read into the claims. See *In re Van Geuns*, 988 F.2d 1181, 26 USPQ2d 1057 (Fed. Cir. 1993). Furthermore, claim 7 only claims the first sealed configuration of the openable seal line in a pants diaper shape.

Claim Objections

2. Claim 7 is objected to because of the following informalities: the second releasable configuration does not require a pants diaper shape and therefore, does not have antecedent basis for "the pants diaper shape" in line 5 of the claim. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claims 1-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Ando et al. USPN 537034.

As to claim 1, Ando discloses an absorbent article designed like underpants, with a pants chassis, first and second leg openings, and a waist opening(Figure 1) comprising: a first openable seal line 5D (Figures 1 and 2). The limitation of the seal line being sealed by a predetermined sealing means prior to use is directed to a process of making the article. "Even though product-by-process claims are limited by and defined by the process, determination of patentability is based on the product itself. The patentability of a product does not depend on its method of production. If the product in the product-by-process claim is the same as or obvious from a product of the prior art, the claim is unpatentable even though the prior product was made by a different process." *In re Thorpe*, 777 F.2d 695, 698, 227 USPQ 964, 966 (Fed. Cir. 1985) (citations omitted). MPEP 2113.

The article further comprises first and second closing means, 6, and 8, respectively. The limitation of the first and second opening and closing means arranged to cooperate when the predetermined sealing means of the openable seal line is broken so as to releasably reseal the openable seal line in the second resealable configuration is directed to an intended use of the article. Intended use must result in a structural difference between the claimed invention and the prior art in order to patentably distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art. See *In re Casey*, 152 USPQ 235 (CCPA 1967) and *In re Otto*, 136 USPQ 458, 459 (CCPA 1963). If the prior art structure is capable of performing the intended use, then it meets the claim limitations.

the first and second opening and closing means are situated on respective side of the first openable seal line 5D (Figures 1 shows tape 6 anchored on one side of the seal line 5D and tape 8 on the opposing side of 5D, see also Figures 2 and 4). The tapes 6 are adhered to an inner surface of the diaper, which is best shown in Figures 2 and 4. Tape 8 is arranged on an outside surface of the pants chassis (Figures 1 and 2).

As to claim 2, see Figure 2.

As to claims 3 and 4, see col. 4, lines 37-46.

As to claim 5, see Figure 2, element 5D.

As to claim 6, see Figure 2, elements 5D near elements 5B.


As to claim 7, the first sealed configuration of the openable seal line 5D defines a pants diaper shape (Figure 1). In the second releasable configuration of the openable seal line, the first and second opening and closing means, 6 and 8, do not protrude from the pants diaper shape (Figure 3).

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jacqueline F. Stephens whose telephone number is (571) 272-4937. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 9:00-5:30.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tanya Zalukaeva can be reached on (571) 272-1115. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


Jacqueline F Stephens
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3761

August 23, 2006